



Wyoming Game and Fish Department

Pinedale Region

August 2017 Newsletter



Heli-Stocking Backcountry Lakes

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) has been stocking fish in alpine lakes via helicopter since the 1970s and stocks several lakes each year. Most alpine lakes do not have suitable spawning habitat to support a naturally reproducing fish population, thus requiring periodic stocking to maintain a sport fishery. The helicopter stocking occurs in August as most alpine lakes are high elevation and late summer is the only time they are free of ice.



Golden trout stocked in the Wind River Range.

Historically, fish were stocked in these backcountry lakes via cream

cans on horseback, which could take several hours or even days to reach but one lake. This was far more stressful on the fish because the transport water warms, which holds less oxygen, and may need to be changed several times on one trip. Helicopter stocking is much more efficient in both time and cost with much greater survival of fish.

The number of fish stocked in a lake depends on the size of the lake, but it is usually around 1,000 fish. Fish are usually dropped approximately 10 feet from the water and are released with a large amount of water which

absorbs most of the impact.

Fish are typically stocked in the Jackson and Pinedale Regions every other year, on odd years. This year the lakes stocked in the Pinedale Region included: Wall, Middle Sweeney, Upper and Lower Cook Lakes, Nelson, Sunrise, Jim Harrower, Mistake and Titcomb lakes #4 and #5.



The helicopter returns after stocking in the Wind River Range.



(Left) Greg Anderson gives Alysia Henderson, both of the Daniel Hatchery, a load of golden trout to be stocked. (Right) Pete Feck with the state-wide Fish Spawning crew, loads one of the eight cylinders with fish to be stocked in the Wind River Range.





Pinedale Region Monthly Newsletter

August 2017



Partners Working for Wildlife

The WGFD Pinedale Habitat & Access Crew partnered with members of Muley Fanatics and Jonah Energy to hold a Volunteer Day to make a variety of improvements to the recently acquired Luke Lynch Wildlife Habitat Management Area (WHMA) north of Pinedale. The group was able to remove 3/4 of a mile of old stock fence, which will be replaced with wildlife friendly pole top fence by a contractor later this month. They also installed a new wildlife jump (below left) to the elk fence on the Luke Lynch WHMA, allowing elk to safely enter the area and stay away from roads and other private land conflicts. The group also removed an old buck and rail fence and cleaned up a lot of other fencing materials that were scattered around the area. The Pinedale Game and Fish folks extend a huge **Thank You** to all the volunteers who came out to make it a better place for wildlife.



Photos provided by Muley Fanatics



Pinedale Region Monthly Newsletter

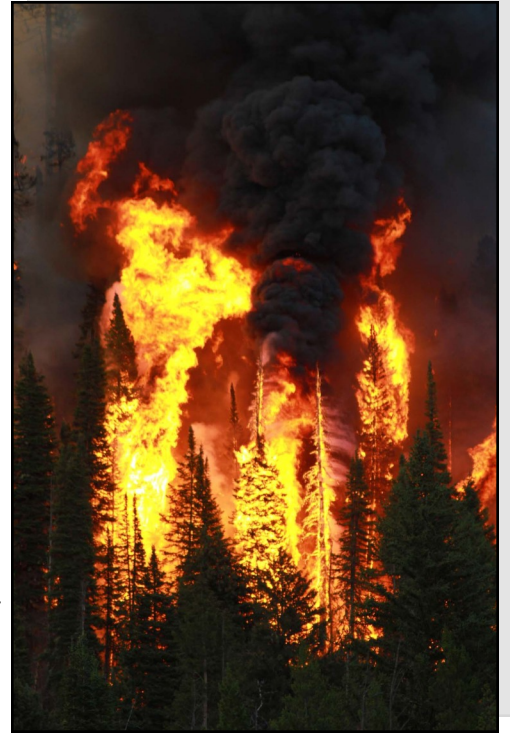
August 2017

Wildfires Benefiting Habitat, Wildlife

The Cliff Creek Fire was first detected on July 17, 2016 and burned 30,000 acres, primarily on the north side of highway 191 between Granite Creek and the town of Bondurant. Fortunately, the fire burned very patchy and a lot of conifers, aspen, riparian and shrub communities did not burn. The Fontenelle Fire burned over 60,000 acres in the Wyoming Range west of Big Piney in 2012. Both are realizing huge benefits to wildlife, primarily because live-stock grazing has been well managed in the delicate burned areas.

In the long term, the mix of different age class vegetation created by the fire create a nice diversity of forage and cover in close proximity to each

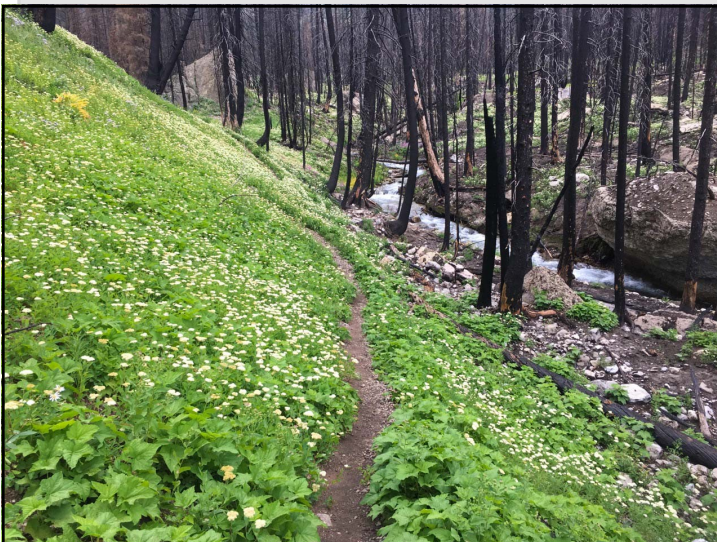
other. Fire is a natural process on the western landscape and these fires are benefiting wildlife through both the quality and quantity of forage.



(Upper Right) Flames from a back burn conducted near Highway 191 on the Cliff Creek fire in 2016. Photo by Amy Collett (Left) Aerial photos taken by Pinedale Habitat Biologist Jill Randall on August 8, 2016, showing the patchwork of burned and unburned areas within the Cliff Creek burn perimeter.



(Left) The burned hillsides along Swift Creek are now covered with serviceberry and a diversity of other plants after last summer's Cliff Creek Fire in the Hoback basin. (Above) Thick stands of aspen are now filling in where conifer trees once stood following the 2013 Fontenelle Fire in the Wyoming Range west of Big Piney.





Pinedale Region Monthly Newsletter

August 2017

Osprey Issue in the Park

Pinedale Game Warden Jordan Kraft responded to a call of an osprey that had gotten tangled in fishing line at the Pinedale Kids Fishing Pond in Boyd Skinner Park. Apparently, the osprey had swooped down to snatch a dead rainbow trout, but it was still attached to a fishing line and the osprey became entangled. The fishing line was wrapped around the osprey's feet and one wing, preventing it from flying. The line was removed and the osprey flew away no worse for the wear.



Illegal Wildlife Shooting Cases

Pinedale Game Warden Bubba Haley investigated a report of an antelope that had been shot near Cora. Haley found the animal and cited a non-resident individual for wanton destruction. Court is pending.

Warden Haley also investigated a shooting of a bull moose in Pinedale. After reviewing the information, the Sublette County Attorney's Office decided to file charges against a Pinedale man for taking the moose without a license. Court is pending in this case as well.



Pinedale Region Monthly Newsletter

August 2017

From the Front Desk...

Pinedale Game & Fish office managers Lori Johnson and Kristen Draney have been getting a lot of hunting-related questions now that some of the early seasons have begun and the mainstream big game hunting is just around the corner. They also are reminding folks that there are some cool Game & Fish products that can be purchased out of the Pinedale office. Stop by to see our pros Lori and Kristen at the front desk for all things hunting before heading afield. Pictured: GPS Wyoming hunt area chip, water proof license holder, compass/emergency whistle/flashlight, hats, knives, water bottles, etc.



Rendezvous Days!

Game and Fish personnel from both the Fish and Wildlife Divisions again participated in the annual Mountain Man Rendezvous celebration in Pinedale. One of the statewide fish stocking trucks was in the parade and several hundred people visited the educational booth highlighting fish, aquatic invasive species and large carnivores.





Pinedale Region Monthly Newsletter

August 2017

Outdoor Classroom

Pinedale Wildlife Biologist Dean Clause (Below), Habitat Biologist Jill Randall and Regional Information and Education Specialist Mark Gocke all provided talks to six different groups of teachers from across the country who were attending the Safari Club's American Wilderness Leadership School. Local Game and



Fish personnel have been meeting with the AWLS teachers camps for many years to discuss a variety of local wildlife management issues such as maintaining big game migrations, sage grouse management, elk feedgrounds & brucellosis, funding and so on.

Addressing the Commission

Both Pinedale Wildlife Supervisor John Lund (Below left) and Pinedale Large Carnivore Biologist Ken Mills were called upon to address the Game and Fish Commissioners at their recent meeting in Afton. John provided a review of the Pinedale Mule Deer Winter Range Task Force and Ken reviewed the Department's wolf management plan and proposed hunting seasons for this winter.

